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ABSTRACT

Noting that most socioeconomic and demographic indicators are negative for Puerto Rican mothers and children, this book enhances the current knowledge about the growth and development of Puerto Rican mothers and children, and discusses the likely social origins of their suboptimal experiences. Thirteen papers are presented. The opening chapter describes the historical context of Puerto Rican migration and examines the current demographic and socioeconomic status of Puerto Ricans on the mainland. Chapter 2 discusses some of the psychological consequences of migration. Chapter 3 describes the health care systems of Puerto Rico. Chapter 4 explores the occurrence of AIDS in women and children in Puerto Rico. Chapters 5 and 6 are concerned with the reproductive health of mainland Puerto Rican women. Chapter 7 examines the impact of AIDS on Hispanic women and children residing in the United States. Chapter 8 examines the physical growth, sexual maturation and obesity in Puerto Rican children. Chapter 9 focuses on the cultural context of adolescent childrearing, while chapter 10 reports on the effects of an early intervention service directed to low-birth-weight infants of various racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, findings that are validated by those in chapter 12 from the Hispanic health and nutrition examination survey. Chapter 11 examines language shifts among mainland Puerto Rican and Mexican American children. Chapter 12 presents the results from the Hispanic Health and Nutrition Examination survey. Finally, chapter 13 investigates the effect of comprehensive pediatric care on the health of poor high-risk Puerto Rican and American black children in New York city. A concluding essay puts forth specific areas for future research to further expand knowledge of the health and development of this population. Each chapter includes references. (AA)